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a special case. The great example of this principle, which has forced itself on the notice of mankind, is the breakdown of ethical rules when they encounter the difficulties of casuistry. It is not apparently possible so to formulate any ethical rule as to confer on it a prophetic adjustment to the circumstances of special cases sufficient to decide them aright in advance, or even to be felt by the best moral sentiment to have any significant application to them at all. "The noble death of Cato" does not fall under the rule against suicide, any more than Regulus's return to Carthage or Socrates's refusal to escape from the city that was bent on "sinning against philosophy," while only a moral pedant would refuse to celebrate with the poet acts like that of Hypermnestra, *splendide mendax, et in omne virgo nobilis ævum*. This impossibility of fixing, in advance of the facts, the rule to be applied to the case is the reason why any applicable system of ethics is always careful to leave the ultimate decision of the right thing to do to the intelligent moral judgment of someone who knows the particular circumstances of the case.

Now the inferences I would draw from this situation are two. (1) There are *no* rules which can be pronounced *absolutely* true, no truths which are strictly universal: those so called, which are common enough, are true in general (ἀπλῶς), and their "truth" does not preclude failure and falsity when they are applied to the wrong sort of case. (2) There are no rules, "universals," "principles," *etc.*, which do not get their real meaning from their application to cases; and as this application has always to be made by some one who wishes to use them, real meaning is always personal. If they are taken in the abstract, the "meaning" that clings to them is merely verbal "dictionary-meaning;" because in Professor Keyser's phraseology they are only "doctrinal functions." The application of these two corollaries to philosophic controversy would, I am sure, greatly accelerate philosophic progress, by clearing away great masses of pseudo-problems and enormously simplifying those that remained.

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OF OUTER-WORLD OBJECTS

IN a previous issue of this JOURNAL¹ I have called attention to the well-recognized fact that, if some special characteristic *x* is frequently noted as inherent in a frequently observed experience *A*; then where there is given a less frequently observed experience *B* in which this characteristic *x* also inheres, the remainder of the more

¹ Vol. XV., No. 23, pp. 627 ff.

frequently observed experience *A* tends to be revived as an image, and this image becomes part and parcel of the total of the less frequently observed experience *B*. And I there noted that in such cases we tend to interpret the less frequently observed experience *B* in terms of the more frequently observed experience *A*. If we perceive a round, properly shaded, piece of yellow paper, we are likely to say "what a clever representation of an orange." Were round, shaded, pieces of yellow paper more common in our experience than oranges, we should say, when we observed an orange, "how much it looks like a round, shaded piece of yellow paper." I shall not repeat the suggestion there made in regard to our assumption that other men have minds like our own. I would ask the reader rather to note that the above mentioned psychological fact may be stated in another way, and to consider certain implications resulting from this observation.

If a characteristic of a given experience *A* is, *after many repetitions*, given in connection with a *new* experiential characteristic *B*, any subsequent repetition of the newer characteristic *B* will tend to carry with it a very marked revival of the often repeated characteristic *A*. Thus it is that the sight of a round, shaded, piece of yellow paper reminds us instantly of an orange, while the sight of an orange does not commonly remind us of a round, shaded, piece of yellow paper.

I presume it may be assumed that the human babe, at the moment immediately following its birth, is a conscious being. Its consciousness may be exceedingly vague and chaotic, but it will be generally agreed, I imagine, that it is sufficiently developed to involve a differentiation of characteristics. Were it not, we should not find ourselves attributing to it the ability to discern the difference between sight and hearing which is indicated by the differences of its behavior upon being stimulated by light and by sound respectively.

If we agree that the child at birth is a conscious being of this type, we can scarcely fail to agree that it was a similarly constituted conscious being some hours before birth, and indeed during some months before birth, to look no further back.² Hence it seems clear that the capacity to differentiate characteristics within consciousness, which is so distinctly evidenced immediately after birth, must have existed during these prenatal months.

This differentiation must, doubtless, have yielded the beginnings of the mental characteristic which we ourselves know as the sense of movement; for it is a well known fact that the babe in the womb is more or less active for some time before birth. And beyond that

² Cf. my *Consciousness*, pp. 166 ff.

this differentiation must have yielded the beginnings of the characteristic which we ourselves know more definitely as the sense of resisted movement; for the mother knows that the babe struggles against the walls of her womb. Thus the child at birth will be possessed of a rudimentary differentiation of its consciousness x corresponding with the obstruction of its movements, which, be it noted, has been often experienced. To this characteristic x we may give a name; let us call it the "otherness" characteristic.

The movements of the child immediately after birth, as it is held in the hands of mother or nurse, must yield an experience of this "otherness" characteristic, which has been so repeatedly experienced during its prenatal life. But presently when it opens its eyes, it experiences a quite new characteristic in rudimentary sight. Its very early life will very soon lead to a conjunction of this new sight characteristic with the often prenataally repeated rudimentary sense of movement characteristic, and presently a conjunction with the as often prenataally repeated "otherness" characteristic, which latter will be given anew when its movements after birth are obstructed by what we call outer-world objects. Hence will arise a new differentiation Y , which we may call the "out-thereness" characteristic.

As the "otherness" characteristic has been very frequently experienced, while the sight characteristic has not, the occurrence of the latter will tend to arouse the revival of the former; and the conjunction of the two differentiations will yield the "out-thereness" characteristic. Thus it will very soon come about that each experience of the sight characteristic of a certain definite type will at once result in the re-instatement in marked form of the revival of the "out-thereness" characteristic. In other words, the babe's sight characteristic of a certain type will immediately suggest the possible existence of the "out-thereness" characteristic as it would be if actually experienced. And it will soon discover by its movements that this imaged "out-thereness" is very frequently displaced by actually realized "out-thereness," as it finds its movements restricted in relation to what it sees.

As the result of this, whenever the babe gains a sight experience of the nature referred to it will immediately picture, as an expectation, the possible realization of the "out-thereness" characteristic; and this expectation will be so frequently realized that the babe will soon come to assume a possible "out-thereness" experience whenever it notes the special sight experience under consideration, even though this "out-thereness" characteristic is not in fact realized. Hence it will soon happen that, whenever the special sight characteristic referred to is given, the child will assume the possible existence of

the "out-thereness" characteristic even when it can not possibly be realized. And this assumption will tend to become habitual because its validity will be attested by innumerable experiments.

In the interest of simplicity I avoid all reference to the fixation of this assumption by the correlation of the movement with senses other than that of sight.

When once the assumption under consideration is firmly established, it is not difficult to picture to ourselves the process by which we construct a somewhat that is the ground of this actual or possible "out-thereness" experience; by which, in other words, we construct on its basis the concept of outer-world objects, and of the outer-world as a whole. What I wish to emphasize is this; that we seem to find in the very nature of consciousness itself the basis for the development of this conception of outer-world objects. And it is to be noted that this conception is itself a mental construct quite within conscious experience.

This conceptual assumption, verified as it is by countless experiments, is perhaps the most thoroughly validated of all the assumptions made by the conscious man; and I for one am content to believe that we are fully warranted in holding that the entities thus assumed do really exist. I am concerned here merely to support the view that this belief in outer-world objects is based upon an assumption pure and simple; that the existence of such outer-world objects is purely hypothetical, although the hypothesis involved is as thoroughly verified as any hypothesis ever can be; and that this assumption, and the hypothesis based upon it, are data of our conscious experience based upon a fundamental characteristic of consciousness. This position is strengthened if we view the subject from a slightly different angle.

When one awakens of a morning all that exists for one is a succession of what we, when sophisticated, call "objects-in-the-outer-world;"—bath-wrapper, bath-tub, towel, water-in-tub—let us say. But presently we find in experience water, and then hot; the former of which is an object-in-the-outer-world, the latter appearing to be of a quite distinct nature, and not an object-in-the-outer-world. We describe it as part of consciousness.

Analysis indicates that this distinction is bound up with the fact that the water experience has, and that the hot experience has not, a special characteristic. This characteristic we may call "out-thereness." It is because we have many experiences of this nature that we are led to distinguish between the outer-world and consciousness.

Further analysis indicates that this "out-thereness" quality within experience, in itself, belongs to the grouping which we call

consciousness. It certainly does not belong to that grouping which we call the outer-world.

If we agree that this is correct, it becomes interesting to note that by adding this psychic quality "out-thereness" to some special item in consciousness to which it is not originally attached, we at once transform this item into an object-in-the-outer-world. A cry of distress out of the mist, carrying with it the psychic quality of "out-thereness," at once transforms what I had just thought to be a mere illusion,—a purely mental thing—into a real man in the outer-world.

On the other hand, we at times find in experience objects-in-the-outer-world from which we are able to remove the psychic quality of "out-thereness;" and then we find that the object-in-the-outer-world disappears as such, and forthwith the experience becomes what appears to be merely an item in consciousness. The drunkard sees real snakes; but, if he is not too far gone, we may convince him that he has experienced only a mental state which we call an hallucination. We thus by reasoning, which is a purely mental process, remove the "out-thereness" quality, which is a mental quality, and *instanter* his object-in-the-outer-world becomes an experience wholly within what he calls his consciousness.

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REVIEWS AND ABSTRACTS OF LITERATURE

Liberty and Democracy and Other Essays in War-Time. HARTLEY BURR ALEXANDER. Marshall Jones Company. 1918. Pp. 229.

This collection of essays was "written, from time to time, under the impulse of events, and for contemporary reading. They can not, therefore, pretend to either system or consecution, and they undoubtedly contain repetitions, not only as between the several essays, but of matters that have been frequently and better expressed elsewhere. . . . True, there is here no constructive, no reconstructive programme. But the hour calls for diagnosis."

I select three points which seem to me to express the burden of the book: 1. The downfall of traditional democracy; 2. An analysis of the German conception of freedom; 3. A sketch of the lines along which a re-statement of democracy should be undertaken.

The dominant intellectual characteristic of the eighteenth century was its spirit of optimism, an optimism at once romantic, humanitarian and complacent. Its basis was founded on man's trust in reason as an expression of universal law and a faith in humanity